

There will be a few final steps to take, a few final amendments to consider, but I hope my Republican colleagues have seen our commitment to developing, drafting, and perfecting this legislation in total concert with the other side of the aisle.

With cooperation from our Republican colleagues, we can finish the bill today, and I hope we do. That is our intention, because despite the lack of attention it has garnered from the press, the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act will be one of the most significant pieces of bipartisan legislation we pass in a very long time. It could be a moment in history that future generations look back on as a turning point for American leadership in the 21st century.

Everyone knows the Federal Government's commitment to science and technology has been slipping for decades. We have become complacent at the top of the global heap, and our position as the world's economic leader is teetering. We now spend less than 1 percent of our GDP on basic scientific research. The Chinese Communist Party, as a percentage, spends more than twice that. We have put ourselves in the very precarious position of potentially falling behind the rest of the world in technologies and industries that will define the next century. If that happens, the days of America leading the world in scientific innovation and the days of America being the leading economic and military power in the world may be over.

This is a moment when the U.S. Senate can arrest the decline and lay the foundation, instead, for another American century. That is why this is a moment in history that future generations could well look back on as a turning point for American leadership in the 21st century.

By investing in science and technology and shoring up critical industries like semiconductors, boosting our universities, laboratories, and businesses, we can keep America on top and outcompete the world in industries of the future. That is just what this legislation would do. Our two parties have worked very hard on it. I think we have made a number of notable improvements to the bill. It is time to move forward together and pass this bill.

JANUARY 6 COMMISSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Madam President, on another matter that should also be just as bipartisan in the Senate: the Commission to investigate the January 6 attack on the Capitol.

We all know that January 6 was one of the lowest moments in our democracy and one of the lowest moments in the grand, grand history of our 200-and-some-odd-year experiment—noble experiment—in democracy. An outgoing President of the United States, fresh off an electoral defeat—a significant electoral defeat—did something that no

other President in recent history has done. Rather than accept the results of the election and support the peaceful transfer of power—a hallmark of our democracy that has inspired democracies all over the world—former President Trump unabashedly lied, repeatedly, about the results of the election and fomented an armed rebellion at the U.S. Capitol.

We are all witnesses to those events. We all heard the lies. We lived through their terrible consequences. Lest we forget, 140 police officers were injured in the attack, and 5 Americans would eventually lose their lives.

In the weeks since, faith in our elections has plummeted. More than half of the Republican Party now believes that the 2020 elections were rigged and that Joe Biden isn't the actual President of the United States. Republican State legislatures across the country, captured by Donald Trump's Big Lie, are tripping over themselves to restrict access to the ballot box. Arizona Republicans, in an "election audit," have been searching for traces of bamboo fibers in the 2020 ballots—chasing a bananas-crazy, rightwing internet conspiracy that China had ballots imported to tip the scales for Biden. That is how insane this has become—hunting for bamboo in ballots.

We need to put a stop to this cancer in the Republican Party. We need to stand up to the Big Lie. We must get at the truth and do everything in our power to restore Americans' faith in our elections and this grand, ongoing, noble experiment of democracy.

In that light, a national, bipartisan, independent Commission to report on the events of January 6 is exactly what the doctor ordered. We have to investigate, expose, and report on the truth. We need to establish a trusted record of what really transpired on January 6 and the events that preceded it. That is what this Commission is designed to do in a bipartisan, straight-down-the-middle manner.

Now, I have gone through all the silly excuses that we have heard from our Republican colleagues about why the Commission isn't needed or is too early or will go on for too long or needs to be modeled after the 9/11 Commission, even though it already is. The truth of the matter seems to be that Senate Republicans oppose the Commission because they fear that it might upset Donald Trump and their party's midterm messaging.

I am not speculating. It was reported in *POLITICO* yesterday that the Senate Republican leader warned his Conference that a January 6 Commission could hurt the Republicans politically.

Well, too bad. This is too important.

For the sake of Americans' faith in our democracy, there must be a full, thorough, and trusted account of what happened on January 6. Senate Republicans must decide if they are on the side of truth or on the side of Donald Trump's Big Lie.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 135; that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate then resume legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Christine Elizabeth Wormuth, of Virginia, to be Secretary of the Army, vice Ryan McCarthy.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, from coast to coast, American families are facing an explosion of violent crime on their streets and in their neighborhoods. The year 2020 saw homicides skyrocket nationwide—the sharpest 1-year increase in decades—and 2021 is already shaping up to be even worse.

Last year, Seattle saw a 61-percent increase in murders citywide. In 2020, Minneapolis saw homicides hit levels not seen since the 1990s, and, so far, 2021 is about doubling last year's pace. Here in Washington, DC, 2020 saw homicides hit a 16-year high, and, again, 2021 is already on an even worse trajectory. The situation is devolving all across the country. In my hometown of Louisville, as one report put it: "[T]he number of slayings in 2020 dwarf[ed] anything Louisville has seen—obliterating the previous record."

Crime and delinquency have many causes. In some ways, the pandemic likely contributed, but it is impossible to ignore that these terrible trends are coming precisely as so-called “progressives” have decided it is time to denounce and defund local law enforcement. Seattle, for example, cut police funding by 20 percent. Minneapolis defunded cops by millions of dollars. The District of Columbia’s city council approved \$15 million in cuts. These boneheaded decisions are the direct result of an anti-law enforcement fad that has swept through the political left like a wildfire.

Perhaps just as important as these funding cuts is the wave of hostile sentiment that has come with them. Harvard scholars have found that, after high-profile incidents reduce the trust that the public and politicians put in the police, the cities in question receive less active policing and, subsequently, see an increase in crime, including homicides.

In other words, in the wake of terrible incidents like we saw last summer, local leaders should look for ways to build bridges and rebuild trust between the vast majority of brave and honorable officers and their communities.

Oh, no. Instead, from city councils to the Halls of Congress, many on the far left decided to crank the knob all the way up on anti-cop rhetoric all across the board:

Not only do we need to disinvest from police but we need to completely dismantle the Minneapolis Police Department.

Policing in our country is inherently and intentionally racist . . . No more policing, incarceration, and militarization.

Incredulous people asked whether this nonsense was ever meant seriously.

Helpfully, one Member of Congress clarified: “Defunding police means defunding police.”

That is a clarifying comment.

A small set of politicians may see selfish opportunities for fame or fundraising if they defame and defund the police, but American families are paying a deadly price.

Defunding the police isn’t just a terrible idea for overall public safety; it is also a uniquely awful strategy for racial justice. One study recently confirmed: “Larger police forces save lives, and the lives saved are disproportionately Black lives.”

So, look. I am not sure exactly how the rantings of far-left Twitter about crime and policing became official Democratic Party dogma in so many places across America. What I do know is that ordinary Americans cannot bear much more of this, and that goes double for the most vulnerable neighborhoods.

ENDLESS FRONTIER ACT

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, last week, the Senate took up sweeping legislation that

touches on big issues that span many committees—from economic policy to national security, to scientific research, and beyond.

Eighty-six Senators voted to proceed to this debate, me included. That wasn’t because the legislation was ready to go. It happened because there is broad bipartisan agreement that America needs to upgrade our competitiveness with China. There was broad agreement that this subject deserved a robust debate and amendment process.

Since then we have voted on some amendments, but as of this moment, the Senate’s bipartisan work is simply not completed.

The Democratic leader indicated that if the chairman and ranking members worked together, if committees put their heads together, their work would get consideration out here on the floor.

Well, Chairman WYDEN and Ranking Member CRAPO of the Finance Committee have a bipartisan provision that is ready to go. They have already done the hard work. They have reached a solution, but thus far the Democratic leader has refused to include it in his substitute and has not allowed the Senate to vote on it separately.

These are long-term issues we are considering. We need to get this right. And during the time this legislation has been on the floor, we have had entire days come and go without any votes at all on the bill.

In several instances, the Democratic leader chose to pivot away from this legislation and devote floor time to nominations.

So there is no excuse for shutting off debate prematurely before the Senate has been able to have its say.

So we will have to see how today unfolds, what additional amendments the Democratic leader lets the Senate consider, how open a process he permits.

Republicans don’t want some big fight over this. We would like to see an outcome—a bipartisan outcome. Even now, discussions are continuing behind the scenes.

But the Democratic leader should not try to force a cloture vote prematurely to stifle the Senate before Members are satisfied that our work is finished.

There is nothing unusual about a minority party denying cloture to secure more amendment votes. I have been here a while. This happens all the time.

Six years ago, even after about two dozen amendment votes, Democrats blocked cloture on a Keystone Pipeline bill until the Senate took a dozen more amendment votes on top of that.

Just last year, even as the economy was tanking around us, the Democratic leader blocked cloture multiple times on the CARES Act—emergency legislation. Why? He wanted more changes.

But I hope it doesn’t come to that today. I hope the Democratic leader lets the Senate be the Senate so we can finish this important legislation.

JANUARY 6 COMMISSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, now one final matter. As my colleagues know, I have been clear and unflinching in my own statements about January 6. But as I have also repeated, there is no new fact about that day we need the Democrats’ extraneous Commission to uncover.

The Department of Justice is deep into a massive criminal investigation. Four hundred and forty-plus people have already been arrested. Hundreds—hundreds—have been charged. Even more arrests are said to be planned. And the Attorney General indicates this investigation will remain a top focus. Multiple Senate committees are conducting their own bipartisan inquiries. And, obviously, the role of the former President has already been litigated exhaustively—exhaustively—in the high-profile impeachment trial we had right here in the Senate several months ago.

I do not believe the additional extraneous Commission that Democratic leaders want would uncover crucial new facts or promote healing. Frankly, I do not believe it is even designed to do that.

That is why the Speaker’s first draft began with a laughably rigged and partisan starting point and why the current language would still lock in significant unfairness under the hood.

So I will continue to support the real, serious work of our criminal justice system and our own Senate committees, and I will continue to urge my colleagues to oppose this extraneous layer when the time comes for the Senate to vote.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

ENDLESS FRONTIER ACT—Resumed

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1260, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1260) to establish a new Directorate for Technology and Innovation in the National Science Foundation, to establish a regional technology hub program, to require a strategy and report on economic security, science, research, innovation, manufacturing, and job creation, to establish a critical supply chain resiliency program, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Schumer amendment No. 1502, in the nature of a substitute.

Cantwell amendment No. 1527 (to amendment No. 1502), of a perfecting nature.